CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

[c1] 1. (Cancelled)

[c2] 2. (Cancelled)

[c3] 3. (Cancelled)

[c4] 4. (Cancelled)

[c5] 5. (Cancelled)

[c6] 6. (Cancelled)

[c7] 7. (Cancelled)

[c8] 8. (Cancelled)

[c9] 9. (Currently amended) The method in accordance with claim 14, wherein said step of collecting ongoing project software metrics data further includes the steps of:

(a) collecting selective periodic or continuous software metrics data from developing software via a software metrics processing tool;

(b) recording the collected software metrics data in a current project software metrics data record in the central bidding server system; and

(c) communicating the updated current project software metrics data record to the contractor system for display.

[c10] 10. (Cancelled)

[c11] 11. (Cancelled)

[c12] 12. (Cancelled)

[c13] 13. (Cancelled)

[c14] 14. (New) A method for conducting, over a network, a software item development bidding transaction and for monitoring the software item development, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) transmitting over the network from a contractor system software requirements identifying the software item to be developed;

(b) controlling a bidder system connected to the network to display the software requirements;

(c) sending bid information along with an identifier of a bidder from the bidder system over the network to a central bidding server system;

(d) retrieving at the central bidding server system historical software metric data previously collected and stored for the identified bidder;

(e) generating, by the central bidding server system, a bid record along with historical software metric data and communicating said bid record and historical metric software data to the contractor system for use in the selection and award; and

(f) collecting subsequently at the central bidding server system ongoing project software metric data form monitoring the successful bidder's performance over periodic measuring intervals.

[c15] 15. (New) The method in accordance with claim14 further comprising the step of selecting a successful bidder, said selecting step comprising the steps of:

(a) estimating the cost of implementing the software requirements based on an average of the historical software metrics data for a plurality of bidders, as stored in the central service bidding system;

(b) communicating to the contractor system over the network all timely submitted bids and corresponding individual historical software metrics data;

(c) receiving at the central bidding server system identification of the selected successful bidder; and

(d) creating a current project software metrics data record associated with the successful bidder in the metrics collection database in the central bidder server system.

[c16] 16. (New) The method in accordance with claim 14, wherein said historical software metric data comprises process metrics.

[c17] 17. (New) The method in accordance with claim 16, wherein one of said process metrics is selected from the group consisting of: resource metrics and personnel experience metrics.

[c18] 18. (New) The method in accordance with claim 14, wherein said historical software metric data comprises product metrics.

[c19] 19. (New) The method in accordance with claim 18, wherein one of said product metrics is selected from the group consisting of: program size, program logic complexity, data structure complexity, and the number of defects uncovered during development testing and use.

[c20] 20. (New) The method in accordance with claim 19, wherein said ongoing project software metric data comprises product metrics.

[c21] 21. (New) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein one of said product metrics is selected from the group consisting of: program size, program logic complexity, data structure complexity, and the number of defects uncovered during development, testing, and use.

[c22] 22. (New) A method for conducting, over a network, a software item development project bidding transaction and monitoring function, said method comprising the steps of:

(a) transmitting, over said network, requirements for the software item to be developed;

(b) controlling a bidder system, connected to said network, to display the software requirements;

(c) sending, over said network, a bid along with an identifier of a bidder;

(d) retrieving historical software metric data previously collected and stored for the bidder, said software metric data comprising product metrics, wherein one of said product metrics is selected from the group consisting of

(i) program size,

(ii) program logic complexity,

(iii) data structure complexity, and

(iv) the number of defects uncovered during development testing and use;

(e) selecting a successful bidder and awarding a contract to develop said software item; and

(f) collecting ongoing project software metric data for monitoring the successful bidder's performance over periodic measuring intervals.

Replacement Sheet